



## **Zenith Forever Contemplating Daring Vistas**

### **2013: In Keeping with its Tradition, Zenith Continues to Innovate**

When Georges Favre-Jacot started his watchmaking company in 1865, he was already convinced that emotion arises from a combination of daring and authenticity. Later, to suggest that his brand offered the ultimate in expertise and high standards, he renamed the company after the highest point in the sky: Zenith.

The founder proved he was daring right from his first year in business. This visionary man had enormous light-filled workshops built in Le Locle, a small town in the Swiss canton of Neuchatel, with the goal of bringing all the skilled watchmaking trades together under one roof. The very first integrated watchmaking "Manufacture" was born, and has remained there since. It enabled him to develop and produce all of the components and control the entire manufacturing process – for the movements, of course, but also for enamelled or painted dials, and even cases. He lost no time in teaching his craftsmen about his calling: continually inventing watches unlike any other, with complete creative freedom, and building them from start to finish.

In fact, innovation was to become a Zenith tradition – to such an extent that over its history, the Manufacture has registered more than 300 patents, created over 600 movement variations, and set the absolute record for chronometer prizes with 2,333. The first integrated automatic chronograph movement, launched in 1969, operated at the exceptional frequency of 36,000 vibrations per hour, and the El Primero chronograph continues to set standards to this day. It is also still the world's most accurate series-produced calibre.

Such extraordinary feats would have been impossible without the men and women who performed them. While the company has, most of all, the talent and passion of its craftsmen to thank for its reputation that has endured generation after generation, it also owes its renown to the amazing projects it has supported over time, undertaken by some extraordinary personalities from among aviators, explorers, and adventurers. From Louis Blériot in 1909, through Norwegian explorer Roald Amundsen, who discovered the South Pole in 1911, to Felix Baumgartner in 2012, Zenith's history is replete with figures who epitomise its legacy of nurturing the entrepreneurial spirit of those who brave conventions to find freedom and fulfilment.

Within the watchmaking context, brands have to set themselves apart. This is primarily accomplished through the creation of distinct "worlds." A long-

established brand such as Zenith holds fast to its founding values, with which everyone – customers and employees alike – can identify.

## **REAFFIRMING THE BRAND VALUES**

As an integral part of a brand's heritage, values enable the brand to construct a "moral framework," a guideline that underlies all of its external and internal discourse. Zenith's values have always clearly shown through in its decisions, actions, and collections. They are now stated explicitly.

Authenticity is a value that links the heritage of the past with the promises of the future. The word also implies that the brand is one of the very few manufacturers that design and develop their own movements. It is a reminder, if one were needed, that Zenith is a credible, legitimate brand. Manufacturing a Zenith watch and its components involves a total of 80 specialist trades, in a process lasting nine months on average. All of our craftspersons, regardless of their technical or artistic speciality – from miniaturisation through working with shapes and materials, or prototype manufacturing and logistics, to timekeeping – share this passion for excellence and love to dedicate their talents to making timepieces they know will endure.

Daring is fundamental to the Zenith spirit – the spirit of innovation – which has been a deeply rooted part of its heritage since the very beginning. This value is tied to the kind of vision Georges Favre-Jacot showed in the early days of his company when he created the first integrated Manufacture in the history of modern watchmaking. Some of the company's many inventions have been a part of this never-ending quest. Examples include El Primero, the first series-produced integrated automatic chronograph movement, which operates at the exceptional frequency of 10 vibrations per second, i.e., with tenth-of-a-second accuracy; the Gravity Control system, which counteracts the effects of gravity and which Zenith is the only manufacturer to offer; and finally the Academy Christophe Colomb Hurricane, a world first that not only brings together these two guarantors of absolute accuracy, but also provides an answer to the loss of isochronism as the watch winds down. The daring that Zenith has always shown can be equated with that of aviation pioneers such as Louis Blériot and Léon Morane, or of those who push back the limits of impossibility, such as Felix Baumgartner.

Finally, the last and probably the most subtle of the three values – pleasure – is to be understood in the sense of accomplishment, the satisfaction of having nothing to prove yet giving oneself the means always to forge ahead, with one's watch as a companion. It is a value that implies recognition, that scorns ostentation but savours the present moment, and in itself justifies the fact that Zenith has always supported the wildest and craziest of projects.

Watchmaking complications continue to fire the imagination, despite the spread of virtual reality and the Internet. Today, more than ever, Zenith is still a constant companion of dream chasers.

## **ASSERTING BRAND IDENTITY**

Having restated its values, Zenith can assert its brand identity: authentic, high-end, passionate and free-spirited. All these are descriptions that bespeak excellence and attitude, words that imply high standards and technical quality, but also emotion, and that are being translated into a new international marketing campaign, a new online presence, and a new booth at Baselworld 2013.

## **A NEW IMAGE MEANS A NEW MARKETING CAMPAIGN**

The new creative proposal puts the “rational” part of the brand’s heritage – the product – firmly centre stage, because it is in seeing the product that someone will fall in love with it, that the first emotions will begin to stir.

For example, while the watch remains central to these first five campaign visuals, it is accompanied by a close-up of one of the technical details in the brand’s repertoire, which exists in complete harmony within a landscape imbued with the spirit of each collection.

Moon phases, a product of the Manufacture’s many areas of expertise, have been added to the Captain Grande Date Moonphase’s Elite 670 ultra-thin movement. The Captain Winsor Annual Calendar brings this ingenious complication together with the legendary El Primero movement for the first time. The mechanism of the 1969 El Primero Chronomaster’s automatic high-frequency column-wheel chronograph is revealed through an open dial. The El Primero Stratos Flyback Striking 10th Tribute to Felix Baumgartner showcases the full power of the Striking 10th and Flyback functions. The Pilot Big Date Special’s large date and luminescent hour-markers elegantly evoke the first Zenith pilot’s watches, which were famous for their accuracy and legibility. Finally, the “Gravity Control” gyroscopic module and fusee-chain transmission mechanism make the Academy Christophe Colomb Hurricane the world’s first imperturbable timepiece, which goes so far as to defy the forces of nature.

However, and this is no doubt a delightful paradox, the “rational” part has a great deal to do with the emotion felt when one contemplates the visuals. Because, far from confining themselves to this technical side, the visuals go so far as to create worlds in line with the watch they illustrate and the sensations it mediates, and also spaces of freedom that favour self-fulfilment, discovery, an enterprising spirit. These worlds are naturally tied to the collection names – the sky for Pilot, the sea for Captain – or, more generally, to the idea of escape, of travel, of “elsewhere” – vast expanses for Academy, distant horizons for El Primero, and so on.

The main message, “Follow your own star”, perfectly reflects the spirit in which the Manufacture was founded: accompany each owner in his projects, his endeavours, and become his echo, his alter ego. The catch phrase is unique, regardless of the model, because owning a Zenith watch partakes of a unique state of mind. It is of course also an allusion to the brand with the guiding star!

The black-and-white colour scheme of the mood visuals, which emphasises the brand's authenticity, contrasts with the warm colour of the materials, making the timepieces stand out.

## **THE WEBSITE ALSO GETS A NEW LOOK**

### [WWW.ZENITH-WATCHES.COM](http://WWW.ZENITH-WATCHES.COM)

Zenith's new website is the result of thoughts on repositioning the brand's digital presence. For example, rather than existing as a simple sales platform, it will let visitors immerse themselves in an elegant, serene world marked by the brand's values, to enjoy what could be called "the Zenith experience."

Everything has been thought of to offer improved accessibility across all platforms – PCs, tablets and smartphones – and optimal use of the digital potential of web-to-store, or pre-shopping, the next stage in e-commerce which is advancing at a double-digit rate toward its 2015 introduction.

Visitors will also find a valuable source of information, especially the collection sections and product sheets. The Ladies' Watches, Limited Editions and Preview pages will now be accessible from the home page. The Manufacture, Fine Watchmaking and Icons tabs will have enhanced content with, for example, the history of the legendary El Primero movement, a descriptive tour of the Manufacture, a presentation about the movements, and also a focus on personalities who have played a part in creating the brand's aura, including Georges Favre-Jacot of course, and also Louis Blériot, Felix Baumgartner, as well as the company's craftspersons.

In addition to brand news, which will be updated regularly, in particular via a newsletter, a new tool will facilitate sharing on social networks and provide access to a dedicated press area containing all downloadable material – press releases and press packets, images, and films.

Finally, improved ergonomics, quicker file downloads, and optimisation for smartphones will be complemented by a faster and easier store locator mode complete with directions, along with the means of establishing priority contact through forms for requesting an appointment or information.

## **A NEW BOOTH AT BASELWORLD 2013**

MUBA (the Schweizer Mustermesse Basel, a Swiss trade fair) was created in 1917 at the initiative of the Basle government. Zenith had its first booth in the watch and jewellery section in 1922. From 1927 on, after a one-year absence, the brand with the guiding star was to attend what was later called the Basel Fair, then Baselworld, every year without interruption. It is in Basle, the world showcase for all its new products, that Zenith was to make its mark on Fine Watchmaking history when it launched its legendary El Primero chronograph movement in 1969.

To celebrate its 90th appearance at the event, this year Zenith has a new booth that reflects the brand's reasserted values.

An impression of authenticity emanates from the very colour of the stone used – a creamy white shade – in combination with the highly elegant colours of wenge wood, tinted glass, and leather. The 100% Swiss booth was designed by the Geneva architectural firm Brandstorm and built by Messerli in Zurich. The lighting and furnishings were custom-made for Zenith. All of which means that the brand's new booth is in keeping with the company's longstanding approach to defining its identity. Reflecting the "new generation" codes of its stores, Zenith has opted for a contemporary interpretation of the Manufacture's façade, the Le Locle facility that dates back to 1865 and still houses the workshops. Other details speak to another value: at the booth's entrance, a line drawing of the El Primero movement recalls and emphasises the Manufacture's creative daring. To the left, Felix Baumgartner's extraordinary feat is shown in a loop on a giant screen. Historic watches and new models are on display in a 23-metre showcase. To the right, visitors can experience the record 2,333 prizes Zenith has won since its founding. They could have been simply mounted on a wall, but the company has created a dynamic, tactile experience by making it possible to "flip through" them like an open book. Finally, contrasting with the light stone, tinted glass hints at the stand's inner life. For visitors, the impression of pleasure and discovery is omnipresent. With its new booth, Zenith continues its tradition of hospitality by welcoming its customers and the media in a warm, unobtrusive three-level space of 760 m<sup>2</sup>. A space that, for a moment, offers a small refuge where one can escape the constraints of the Fair, a "haven of freedom" where one discovers, intact, an unchangingly enterprising spirit that is still vibrantly alive after nearly 150 years.

Founded in Le Locle in 1865 by a visionary watchmaker, Georges Favre-Jacot, the Manufacture Zenith earned swift recognition for the precision of its chronometers with which it has won 2,333 chronometry prizes in a century and a half of existence: an absolute record in terms of pocket watches, onboard timers and wristwatches. Having earned fame thanks to its legendary El Primero calibre – an integrated automatic column-wheel chronograph movement launched in 1969 and endowed with a high frequency of 36,000 vibrations per hour that ensures measurements accurate to the nearest 1/10th of a second – the Manufacture Zenith has since developed over 600 movement variations. All Zenith watches are fitted with an in-house Zenith movement and are developed by the Manufacture in Le Locle. The latter currently stands at the exact spot where its founder built the first company workshop, thus physically embodying a continuity that is a rarity in itself.

## **MANUFACTURE ZENITH**

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